

The Seven Bowls

Revelation 15:1-16:21

1. Revelation 15 = an introduction to the “last” plagues in Revelation 16. A scene of triumph.
“Then I saw another great and awe-inspiring sign in heaven: seven angels with the seven last plagues; for with them God’s wrath will be completed.”

What does John see:

- *“Another great and awe-inspiring sign”* = *thumastos* – the quality of astonishment.
 - *“Seven angels with the seven last plagues”* = this is it!
 - *“God’s wrath will be completed”* – brought to a conclusion. *Thumos* = the fury of God. Instead of *orge* (God’s settled disposition against evil) – Unmitigated fury, rage, and ferocity.
 - *“Sea of glass mixed with fire”*. (4:6 = sea of glass like crystal).
 - *“Those who had won the victory standing on the sea with the harps of God”*. *Nikao* = victorious, overcome. The vast majority of the earth’s population during the last days of the tribulation yield to the two beasts of chapter 13. Those who do not are martyred for their faith, except the 144,000 (protected by God).
 - The martyred saints singing a victory song:
 - ✓ *“Great and awe-inspiring are your works, Lord God Almighty.”* *Pantokrator* = ruler of all.
 - ✓ *“Just and true are your ways – king of the nations”*.
 - ✓ *“Who will not fear and glorify your name?”* Unthinkable
 - ✓ *“You alone are holy.”* *Hosios* = purity and worth
 - ✓ *“All the nations will come and worship before you because your righteous acts have been revealed.”* When the nations see the righteous acts of God revealed in these last judgments, all protests are come to nothing.
 - *“Heavenly temple – the tabernacle of testimony.”* Not the temple of Solomon and Herod, but the wilderness tabernacle. Holy of holies, only breached once a year by the high priest. Containing the ark of the covenant (Ten Commandments, Aaron’s rod, and a manna pot = God’s word and God’s protection). Seven angels with the bowls of God’s wrath. Temple filled with smoke – no one could enter until the seven plagues completed.
2. Revelation 16 = the angels pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath one at a time. If taken literally – defy human imagination.
 - First bowl = *“severely painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped its image.”* Painful could mean malignant or nasty.
 - Second bowl = Poured into the sea. *“sea turned to blood like that of a dead person, and all life died.”* Wide-scale destruction, the natural order of the planet is dismantled.
 - Third bowl = Poured into the rivers and the springs of water – *“they turn to blood.”* Reminder from the angel of the waters – God is holy and just – *“true and just are your judgments.”* Those who persecuted and martyred the saints now drink their poisoned blood supply – and *“they deserve it.”*

- Fourth bowl = Poured on the sun = “*allowed to scorch people with fire and intense heat.*” Even though they are aware of the reason for these judgment, they “*blasphemed the name of God and did not repent or give Him glory.*”
- Fifth bowl = Poured out on the throne of the beast, and “*its kingdom was plunged into darkness.*” The result = people gnawed their tongues because of their pain and sores, blasphemed God, and refused to repent.
- Sixth bowl = Poured out on the great river Euphrates, and “its water dried up to prepare the way for the kings of the east.”
 - ✓ Three unclean spirits like frogs from the mouth of the beast, the dragon, and the false prophet. They are demonic spirits performing signs. Two kinds of spirits in the Bible: Angels = “*ministering spirits*” (Hebrews 1:14) Fallen angels = “*evil spirits*” (Jude 6)
 - ✓ Reminder warning – “*Look, I am coming like a thief.*” Not surprised, but unannounced.
 - ✓ Third Revelation beatitude (first beatitude 1:3, second beatitude 14:13) – “Blessed is the one who is alert and remains clothed so that he may not go around naked and people see his shame.” Maintaining purity and righteousness.
 - ✓ Kings assembled at Armageddon.
- Seventh bowl = Poured out into the air. Loud voice – “*It is done!*” Flashes of lightning, rumbling, and peals of thunder. Severe earthquake – the great city (Jerusalem) split into three parts; the cities of the nations fell; Babylon filled with the wine of God’s fierce anger; every island fled and mountains disappeared. 100-pound hailstones. The response of the people – blasphemed God.

Conclusions:

1. God’s love and God’s wrath are co-equals.
2. People who reject God’s love and resist God’s mercy bring judgment upon themselves – “*they deserve it.*”
3. Not even an awareness of God’s wrath will cause some people to cease rebellion and repent.
4. The evidence of demon possession – not possible for a believer (body is the temple of the Holy Spirit). External – opposition to the church. Only Jesus has the power sufficient to deal with demonic possession. Prayer for God’s intervention and appeal to the name above all names constitute the only methods to deal with demonic possession.

